

INTELLOFAX 21

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1. When the organization of the new Soviet political regime was announced following Stalin's death, it appeared that Malenkov had pretty well sewed everything up. Since that time, however, I believe that this picture has changed and that there is now more of an equilibrium between Malenkov and Beriya. One symptom of this change has been the reporting in the Soviet press of meetings at which both men appeared. This reporting, which of course follows a definite protocol, gives equal applause to both. There are other factors which tend to bear out this theory of equality between the two.

2. In this situation, the position of the Red Army becomes very important and for this reason I suggest that there are two people whose activities should be watched very closely, namely Kuznetsov and Zhukov. Kuznetsov is definitely Malenkov's man and as chief of the main political administration of the War Ministry, is the basis of Malenkov's liaison with and control of the Army. Whether or not Malenkov can obtain control over the Army may depend on Kuznetsov.

3. Although Zhukov is not at the moment very important, he may become a key figure in the event that the balance of power referred to above becomes a more active struggle. In the event that this happens, he may be able to swing the Army support to either Beriya or Malenkov.

4. Certain students of Soviet affairs have felt that the appointment of Suslov to the Party Secretariat was highly significant because of his membership in the Zhdanov group. Actually, however, this membership is merely a matter of history and Suslov, seeing which way the wind was blowing, made his peace with Malenkov some time ago. In his present position, however, he is vulnerable both because of his former association with Zhdanov which may at any time be brought up if it becomes necessary to get rid of him, and also because he is one of the younger theoreticians of the Party and theoreticians in the Soviet system are always vulnerable.

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